DP

UNITED
NATIONS

Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Dist.
GENERAL

DP/FPA/CP/74
7 February 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-eighth session
3 - 21 June 1991, New York
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Recommendation by the Executive Director
Assistance to the Government of Albania
Support for a comprehensive population programme

Proposed UNFPA assistance:	$3 million
Estimated value of the Government's contribution:	To be determined
Duration:	Five years
Estimated starting date:	January 1991
Executing agencies:	Government of Albania United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
Government co-ordinating agency:	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

/...

91-03912

READEX
FICHE

ALBANIA

Demographic facts

Population Total (000)	
Total	3,245
Males	1,670
Females	1,575
Sex ratio (/100 females)	106.0
Urban	1,147
Rural	2,099
Per cent urban	35.3
Population in year 2000 (000)	3,795
Functional age groups (%)	
Young child: 0-4	11.0
Child: 5-14	21.6
Youth: 15-24	19.2
Elderly: 60+	8.2
65+	5.3
Women: 15-49	24.8
Median age (years)	24.0
Dependency ratios: total	61.1
(/100) Aged 0-14	52.5
Aged 65+	8.6
Agricultural population density (/hectare of arable land)	2.64
Population density (/sq. km.)	113
Average annual change (000)	
Population increase	55
Births	74
Deaths	19
Net migration	0
Annual population total (% growth)	1.63
Urban	2.71
Rural	1.01
Crude birth rate (/1000)	21.9
Crude death rate (/1000)	5.6
Net migration rate (/1000)	0.0
Total fertility rate (/woman)	2.70
Gross reproduction rate (/woman)	1.30
Net reproduction rate (/woman)	1.25
Infant mortality rate (/1000)	32
Life expectancy at birth (years)	
Males	70.3
Females	75.4
Both sexes	72.8
GNP per capita (U.S. dollars, 1988)	*

Sources: Population density on arable land is derived from two publications issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: FAO Production Yearbook 1985 and World-wide Estimates and Projections of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Population Segments 1950-2025, ESS/MIS/86/2; gross national production per capita: World Bank, World Development Report 1990. Figures for population, total population by sex, population by age group, age indicators, urban-rural population, and population density (/sq. km.) refer to the year 1990; figures for average annual change, rate of annual change, and fertility and mortality are the five-year averages for 1990-1995. These data are from the Population Division, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, World population prospects: 1988.

* not available.

/...

I. SUMMARY

1. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) proposes to support a comprehensive programme in the amount of $3 million over a five-year period, starting in January 1991, to assist the Government of Albania in achieving its population and development objectives. This would be UNFPA's first programme in Albania.

2. The proposed programme is based on the findings and recommendations of a UNFPA mission that visited the country from 2 to 14 December 1989. The mission found that the Government has a well-defined population policy covering three sectors: maternal and child health (MCH); demographic data collection and analysis; and women, population and development. The proposed UNFPA programme has been specifically designed, in close co-operation with the Government, to fit within the Government's overall population strategy and would complement and supplement its national population activities.

3. The main objectives of the programme would be: (a) to strengthen the Government's institutional capacity, particularly in the area of maternal and child health, through provision of training and modern equipment; (b) to increase the knowledge base in demographic statistics in order to establish a firm foundation of information for integrating population factors into development planning and for further developing the population policy; and (c) to create awareness of the country's population issues among selected target audiences.

4. All projects under the proposed programme, as in all UNFPA-assisted programmes, would be undertaken in accordance with the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action; that is, that population policies should be consistent with internationally and nationally recognized human rights of individual freedom, justice and the survival of national, regional and minority groups (para. 14 (d)); that respect for human life is basic to all human societies (para. 14 (e)); and that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and to have the information, education and means to do so (para. 14 (f)).

II. BACKGROUND

Demographic indicators

5. Albania has a total area of 28,748 square kilometres comprising 15 per cent of plains and 77 per cent of hilly and mountainous areas; the remainder is water. The mid-1988 population is estimated by the Directorate of Statistics of the State Planning Commission at 3.1 million, with a population growth rate of 2.02 per cent (see demographic facts sheet on p. 2 for United Nations estimates). The average family size is 4.6 people in the rural areas and 2.6 in the urban areas. Life expectancy for males is 70.3 and for females is 75.4. Infant

mortality in 1988, according to the Government, was 25 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality was 25 per 100,000 live births. Demographic indicators vary significantly from region to region, however, as do socio-economic indicators.

Social and economic indicators

6. Literacy in Albania is virtually 100 per cent, and education is free. There is one university in the country, the Enver Hoxha University in Tirana, and five other institutes of higher learning, such as the Agriculture High Institute of Tirana and the Agriculture High Institute of Korça. Overall, women make up 50.3 per cent of the student population of all higher education institutions.

7. The country has a comprehensive health system with at least a nurse-midwife in every village. A health centre with a general practitioner serves a group of two to four villages. In each of the country's 26 administrative districts, there are village health centres, zonal hospitals, town hospitals and district hospitals. There are 10 regional hospitals in the country, which include all medical specialities. In 1988, there were 4,600 physicians in Albania, or 147 per 100,000 inhabitants. Thirty per cent of the physicians were posted in the rural areas.

8. Medical services are free, and medicines are supplied free to infants up to one year of age. However, medical equipment of all kinds, including equipment for prenatal diagnosis and epidural anaesthesia, is either in short supply or completely lacking.

9. Family planning services in Albania consist of: (a) the health education of mothers by midwives in traditional family planning methods, and (b) the use of condoms, the only contraceptive generally available, which can be purchased in pharmacies in limited supply. Medical students receive only two hours of training in family planning and are not exposed to the practice of modern family planning methods. Modern contraception is used for medical purposes only. Abortion is illegal except for therapeutic reasons.

10. The Government's current development plan, 1986-1990, is its eighth. Official economic statistics are available only as percentage indicators, and the gross output of goods and services is expressed as the global social product. During 1987 and 1988, the economy grew at 1.2 per cent each year, less than the Government's estimated annual population growth rate of 2 per cent for those years. This has affected government spending for health and education, which has been declining proportionately in recent years. Under the Government's next five-year plan, 1991-1995, the global social product is projected to increase 26-27 per cent over that of 1990.

11. Most of the economically active population works in agriculture. Women make up half of the work force and more than half of those working in agriculture. The Constitution of the country and the Labour Party of Albania promote full participation of women in all political, economic, social and cultural development of the country. However, the Women's Union of Albania, an organization of about 700,000 members, has noted significant regional as well as urban and rural differences in the status of women.

Government position regarding population

12. The Government's 1991-1995 development plan includes a well-defined population policy in the areas of maternal and child health, demographic data collection and analysis, and women, population and development. The Government also develops yearly implementation programmes for its five-year plan.

13. The policy on health is spelled out in the National Health Programme for 1991-1995. Through investment in the public sector, the Government intends to increase life expectancy at birth, prolong the period of active life, reduce infant, child and maternal mortality, raise the level and quality of health services, and narrow the health differences between urban and rural areas and between different areas of the country. Specific targets are given in most cases up to the year 2000 for each goal; for instance, the aim is for child mortality to be under 10 per 1,000 live births by the year 2000. The programme is also expected to reduce abortions, currently estimated at 10 per cent of all pregnancies, by 90 per cent. The Government, which intends to maintain the present rate of population growth and to promote the use of traditional family planning methods only, accepts the principle that birth spacing is beneficial to the health of mothers and children.

14. The Government has been relying on a programme of information, education and communication (IEC) to achieve its health targets and intends to intensify and expand IEC activities to reach its 1991-1995 goals. Working through the Ministry of Health's health education centres throughout the country, as well as the Women's Union and the Youth Union networks, and radio and television, the Government has emphasized interpersonal channels of communication, in-school education, community meetings and the use of mass media.

15. The Government is committed to improving the role and status of women, as indicated by the following goals of the current five-year plan: to raise further women's political and ideological awareness of the major role they have in society in order to become more active in the political and social life of the country; to make all women conscious of their major role in the economy, production, and in solving problems of work and poverty; to develop women's self-confidence in all directions in order to strengthen the family and to harmonize family relations; to raise women's educational level; and to raise the method and style of work of the Women's Union itself to enable it to complete its major tasks.

III. REVIEW OF UNFPA AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO DATE

16. UNFPA has co-operated on a modest scale with the Government of Albania since 1984, providing assistance on a project-by-project basis in the areas of maternal and child health/family planning (MCH/FP) and data collection. Three projects, two in MCH/FP and one for the census, and a pre-project study tour of MCH/FP activities, account for the $1.5 million (1983-1990) of assistance to the country.

Maternal and child health and family planning

17. Two successive four-year MCH/FP projects assisted the Ministry of Health in establishing an Institute of Paediatrics in Tirana as a national referral centre for the treatment of obstetric and paediatric diseases. UNFPA assistance provided training in maternal and neonatal care to nine paediatricians and two gynaecologists, including two-to-three-day segments on family planning. These physicians returned to the Institute to train 100 paediatricians and 300 midwives in neonatology and provide a team of health professionals with information on birth spacing. UNFPA support also included a study tour for the Vice-Minister of Health and the Head of the MCH Department to view MCH/FP activities in four Nordic countries. Owing to the emphasis on traditional family planning methods, however, the effect of providing birth spacing information has been limited.

Data collection and analysis

18. The other area of UNFPA assistance has been in the data collection field. Under a project supporting the conduct of the Population and Housing Census of 1989, UNFPA provided $418,864 in assistance over two years, 1989-1990, to improve the technical skills and institutional capacity of the Directorate of Statistics in the State Planning Commission and the Institute of Informatics and Applied Mathematics of the Academy of Sciences. The project also provided short-term training in data entry and editing, demography and sociology, as well as computer equipment and software for tabulating the census data. The census data tabulation has now been completed and is ready for evaluation and analysis.

Other external assistance

19. UNFPA is the sole source of external assistance for MCH/FP activities in Albania. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is carrying out a project with UNDP funding to teach computer technology in schools; however, UNFPA has been the only outside source of funding for the census.

IV. PROPOSED PROGRAMME 1991-1995

20. The UNFPA mission that visited Albania 2-14 December 1989 found officials at all levels of Government eager to implement a programme in support of its

population policy. The country has several strengths: a well-defined population policy covering the sectors noted above, a firm administration which is organized down to the village level, singular commitment of the people, no foreign debt, almost universal literacy and a determination to involve women in development. Albania does not, however, have access to information on recent advances in the population field or possess modern equipment or technical and research skills. The mission therefore recommended a five-year country programme, 1991-1995, encompassing assistance for MCH/FP, information and communication, data analysis, demographic studies, and women, population and development.

21. The main objectives of the proposed programme are identified in paragraph 3 above. The strategy of the programme would be to concentrate on upgrading MCH services in order to reduce maternal mortality and promote child spacing and on directing information campaigns on proper nutritional and health practices to women of reproductive age. The programme would also supplement the Government's efforts to achieve self-reliance in data analysis and demographic research, providing assistance for the analysis of 1989 census data and the undertaking of specialized demographic training and studies. Finally, the programme would strengthen the Albanian Women's Union so that it can expand its programme of improving the status of women for fuller participation in population and development activities and reduce disparities among regions in the status of women.

Maternal and child health and family planning

22. UNFPA assistance to this sector would focus on further developing the national health programme for the protection of mothers' and children's health. The primary objective is threefold: (a) to reduce infant mortality to below 15 per 1,000 live births by the end of UNFPA programme by training personnel and providing basic equipment to the maternity care network and by completing a study on preventable causes of perinatal/maternal mortality in four districts; (b) to reduce maternal mortality to below 15 per 100,000 live births by providing modern contraceptives to women at high risk during pregnancy, thereby reducing the incidence of unsafe, illegal abortions; and (c) to reduce premature births by 30 per cent by the end of 1995 by, in addition to strengthening the maternity care network, holding a national workshop in 1991 on Better Health for Mothers and Children through Birth Spacing and by implementing by 1995 an intensive information campaign on the benefits of birth spacing. UNFPA assistance would also be used to compile reliable data on contraceptive prevalence. UNFPA would provide approximately $1.5 million for these activities, which would be implemented by the Ministry of Health. WHO would serve as executing agency.

Information, education and communication

23. As part of the MCH/FP activities described above, UNFPA would support an information campaign on natural family planning and barrier methods of contraception, on prevention of unwanted pregnancy, on pregnancy and delivery

and on newborn and infant care. The campaign would be carried out by the Education Department of the Ministry of Health in the four districts covered by the study on perinatal and maternal mortality. At least four videos of 20 minutes each would be produced for use in the four district maternity hospitals and at the Institute of the Mother in Tirana. Leaflets and posters would also be produced and distributed to village centres and prenatal clinics as well as to health education centres. The Women's Union of Albania would work closely with the Ministry of Health in proposing subjects for posters and leaflets and would also distribute them through its network of women's clubs. UNFPA assistance would be used to provide video equipment and training which would be required for this campaign. UNFPA proposes an amount of $180,000 for activities in this sector.

Population dynamics

24. Demographic evaluation and analysis of the 1989 population census. UNFPA assistance in the amount of $600,000 over five years, 1991-1995, is recommended to strengthen the demographic evaluation and analysis capability of the Directorate of Statistics and to establish a firm foundation of demographic information that will serve as a basis for integrating population factors into development planning and for formulating population policy.

25. Under this project, members of the Demography, Civil Registration, Education and Culture, and Health Departments of the Directorate of Statistics would be trained in demographic analysis, methodology, population and development and sample survey techniques. The census data would be further tabulated and analysed; eight country-level monographs and an appropriate number of district and town monographs would be completed and distributed to policy makers and scholars, and the results discussed. This project would be executed by the United Nations and implemented by the Directorate of Statistics.

26. Establishment of a Population Studies Unit in the Economics Faculty of the Enver Hoxha University. Since there are no fully trained demographers or population specialists in the country, the Government has requested UNFPA assistance in the amount of $510,000 over five years, 1991-1995, to establish teaching and research capabilities in population, and, by the end of the project, a chair in population studies at the Enver Hoxha University in Tirana. The Population Studies Unit would include a documentation and a computer centre. It is expected that the research done under this project would assist the Government in evaluating its population and development policies.

27. The Government has given highest priority to the following research themes: relationship between economic growth variables and population growth rates and how this relationship affects the population structure; internal migration, urban growth and consequences of economic growth; regional economic development and management of population variables; population projections by sector, region,

subregion and other planning-unit levels; age structure of the population and social and economic problems of aging; and a demographic atlas of Albania for planning purposes.

28. This project would be executed by the United Nations and implemented by the Enver Hoxha University.

Women, population and development

29. UNFPA would assist the Government through the Women's Union to carry out its goal of reducing the considerable regional differences that still exist in the status of women throughout the country. Through its network of women's clubs, the Women's Union would mount education programmes to make women more aware of their equal status under the law as well as communication programmes to educate men to take more responsibility for child rearing and sharing of household chores in accordance with the goals outlined in the 10th Congress Report of the Women's Union of Albania. At the same time, women need to be educated about responsible parenthood and birth spacing, using government-approved methods, in order to improve their health. The network of women's clubs could also be used to conduct consciousness-raising programmes for employers.

30. The Union's managerial capacity and technical skills in audio-visual design and production would need to be improved to carry out this education and communication programme. UNFPA proposes a project in the amount of $200,000 over five years, 1991-1995, to include study tours, training in the use of audio-visual equipment and in the production of radio and television programmes, and the provision of equipment.

Programme co-ordination

31. The Department of International Organizations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be responsible for co-ordinating the programme. The UNFPA programme would also be co-ordinated with any other activities that United Nations agencies may undertake in the country.

Programme evaluation, monitoring and management

32. A UNDP office is expected to be opened in Tirana in March 1991. The UNFPA Representative, who is also the UNDP Resident Representative, would monitor the programme at the field level. All projects would submit yearly progress reports and be subject to annual tripartite reviews, and the programme as a whole would be reviewed at mid-term.

Financial summary

33. As indicated in paragraph 1, UNFPA proposes to support a programme in the amount of $3 million over five years in Albania. UNFPA assistance would be divided as follows:

	UNFPA regular resources $
Maternal and child health and family planning	1,510,000
Information, education and communication	180,000
Data collection and analysis	600,000
Population dynamics	510,000
Women, population and development	200,000
Total	3,000,000

V. RECOMMENDATION

34. The Executive Director recommends that the Governing Council:

(a) Approve the programme for Albania in the amount of $3 million for the five-year period 1991-1995;

(b) Authorize the Executive Director to allocate the funds and make the appropriate arrangements with the Government of Albania and with the executing agencies.